

20CR202  
USA v. Shader

Received  
In Chambers of  
U.S. District Judge  
DORA L. IRIZARRY

SEP 20 2022

9/6/2022

Your Honor,

Hello, my name is Jeff Butler, I am a musician and educator from Connecticut, and am writing to you about my friend Samantha Shader. I Understand you are handling her case and sentencing. I hope I can help with my knowledge of Sam and her situation.

I met Sam a number of years ago as a fellow musician. We bonded over playing songs together and taught each other some new songs and techniques. We also clicked because, much like me, she is happy to share her knowledge whether it be in a formal teaching setting or casually.

Since her incarceration she has not been able to play instruments, but she tells me she can listen to music, and has had other outlets as an artist and teacher. She created art for an online art show and sold her works. She has also completed as many classes as has been possible with the lockdowns. Not only does she excel at her classes but she also takes her time to tutor other inmates in areas they may need help. She told me a story of how proud she was when someone that she tutored passed their class. That is Sam, a positive creator and helper of fellow humans.

I realize, from reading some of the news articles after her most recent arrest that Sam had been arrested before in different states. However, in the years leading up to her arrest, she was living at home with her family, helping to take care of the land. She told me stories of the rattlesnakes she would see while out on the land, cleaning up campsites and watching her two dogs. This seemed to me to be a big step forward for her, returning to her family and finding meaning and peace in a quiet family setting.

When the death of Mr. George Floyd sparked a nationwide protest for the protection of Black lives, Sam wanted to participate in solidarity and support of our nation's people, as did I. I was there to show support and help where I could, peacefully of course, with no violence.

I spent most of the day and night with Sam and her sister. We found a large gathering of people and joined in the crowd. As we stood on the sidewalks we witnessed and experienced multiple instances of police officers using physical force and weapons on peaceful protestors. I was deliberately shoved to the pavement by a bike officer, with his bike, for standing on the sidewalk. We saw a young lady slammed into a parked car by an officer with his shield. It was a traumatizing experience and still has me shaking thinking of it today. When the officers who are there to protect people are shoving and hitting the people roughly against the hard surfaces of the city it becomes very emotional. This is all to paint you the picture of why emotions were

running high due to the traumatic events Sam witnessed leading up to her arrest. Sadly I was separated from her and her sister before the arrest took place, but I can tell you I did not see Sam commit any violent acts. We were peacefully protesting as was our right, despite witnessing and experiencing violent acts against citizens by multiple police officers that day. It was a scary situation for sure.

I hope my first hand account of the day's events can shed some light on the situation. We all make mistakes of course, especially when emotional. This was no ordinary day for Sam, me, or anyone in the country for that matter. It breaks my heart that because of one emotional day Sam has now been away from her family and friends and her life at home where she was working towards a better future for her and others. I do know that when Sam is home she plans to continue this path. She is already taking as many classes as possible, and will be working toward becoming a mechanic. She is certainly missed a whole lot by her family and friends, and we all hope to be able to see her again as soon as possible, so she can share her love for her fellow humans and country, making it a better place for us all. Please don't hesitate to reach out and get in touch if you have any questions, concerns or would like to talk. I appreciate your time and service in this matter.

Thank you kindly for listening,  
Sincerely,

Jeffrey Butler

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